

## Mme. Maeterlinck Argues for the Equality of Sexes---Refuses to Discuss American Woman Until She Has Known Her.

MME. MAETERLINCK, since her arrival in America, has found it advisable to become emphatic on many points. But the most emphatic is that which involves the freedom of women.

On first meeting Mme. Maeterlinck she receives you with a graciousness, with a smile, that indicates her as a woman of thought, a woman who will not utter the catch phrase and who takes a large view of life. She is feminine, yes; but she has

is the only way to be essentially free. I not seriously tell the readers of the HERALD what I think." Then followed a bit of advice which it would be well if some well known travelers to America would take to themselves.

### Can't Judge Americans.

"I have no opinions of America, only impressions," Mme. Maeterlinck continued. "But who would not be sympathetic with women such as I have met here who come toward me, strong admirers of the work of my husband? Naturally, that is the direct road to my heart." Now, here is the advice to Mr. Wells and Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Ward, all those writers who take a flying glance at America and think they know it. "I believe that one should live at least a year in a country and share in its life before one has a right to give an opinion of any worth. Don't you agree with me?"

She turned to speak to her secretary and though her time was limited one could see that Mme. Maeterlinck was interested. She is a woman of tact, of executive ability. Never once did she falter in giving directions, and then she returned to the topic as though there had been no interruption. She is used to being interviewed.

"Of course," she continued, "those who come to me come only to speak to me on the surface; they show nothing of what they really are. But there is one thing that I know, and I am sure that the rest of the world knows, without having to come to America to learn it, and that is that they admire above all things the education which is given to the young American girl. She seems much more interesting and much more sound than in other places.

### New York and Boston.

"People have asked me countless times whether I see a difference between New York and Boston. I only came here to-day to sing at Mrs. Ogden Mills', but from the little I have seen of the city I should say that in New York there is always movement, a nervous tension which is totally lacking in Boston. Ah!" she exclaimed, her whole face lighting up at the mention of St. Wandrille, the old Benedictine monastery which Maeterlinck bought for his Rouen wife, "there is no comparison between the city and the country. At the Abbey I have the silence, I have my regularity of work, I have my solitude. Then I can study and practice."

"And that involves both singing and acting?" It was suggested. "Which do you prefer?" "They are so different that it is difficult to make a choice. Besides which, I am interested in both, and that shows to a certain extent that I have no special preference. But the pleasure one derives from each is quite different. Playing a part is much more of an intellectual, of a mental pleasure, and in singing the physical sensation is greater. In lyrical exaltation one gives forth something that defies the mind--call it a force of nature. The two are quite opposed as far as the artist's pleasure is concerned."

No. It is impossible to take Mme. Maeterlinck away from the philosophical point of view. She is too much of a Maeterlinck for that. Why, she even uses his very terms sometimes. While she was speaking on the subject of education for women he declared: "The word 'education' embraces everything that concerns life--as much the life artistic, intellectual and moral as the life interior and the life exterior."

### The Individualist.

Evidently Mme. Maeterlinck, the individualist, finds herself too closely identified with the fame of her husband. Or it might be said that she is anxious to be measured by herself. The actress, for instance, would not limit herself to one dramatist.

"I shall play whatever I like. It is not because Maeterlinck is Maeterlinck that I interpret him," she declared, "but because I find in him what I prefer, and even before I knew him I had a preference for his work."

For a second time Mme. Maeterlinck showed herself to be a Frenchwoman; her gestures quite escaped her. The first time was when she was asked whether she cared to write.

"Love to write?" she exclaimed. "Passionately!" and there was a true ring of enthusiasm in her voice. But evidently in her literary attitude she is in accord with her husband, who has not yet given to us in this day of ultra-modern discussion on the stage any play which is strictly modern in outward condition. On this point Mme. Maeterlinck's interest was aroused, especially when she approached the subject of Brieux, whose published plays have just been debarred from the New York Public Library.

"I think that Brieux's plays are very interesting as these--healthy in their human and social point of view, but from the point of view of art they are not even literary. I regard them as interesting documents of humanity and of positive life."

And so while one goes to the Knickerbocker Hotel to talk with Georgette Leblanc, the actress, one comes away with the idea that if her husband is the philosopher of the feminine she in her person is the epitome of that philosopher. And on parting she volunteered this:--

"Let me say," she declared with much spirit, "how much I like the way in which Americans conduct interviews. You question me upon the most interesting things in life. I have such respect for that method of reaching a person--a method quite execrable in France. Many people laugh at the American habit of rushing for interviews, but I find, on the contrary, that they are handled in such a serious fashion. I delight in them. For I have not as yet been embarrassed by such foolish questions as what is my favorite color or as to the hats and the shoes that I wear and a thousand other foolishnesses."

She says farewell cordially, and one felt rather grateful that neither the diamond nor the leopard skin coat had been dragged in.



MME. MAETERLINCK

grown into the ways of broad utterance. She has enthusiasm, but it is the enthusiasm of spirit. For a Frenchwoman she is surprisingly calm and free of gesture.

She came down from her rooms at the Knickerbocker a blue and white and gold study, in a scarlet robe with a hood of the same color. Outwardly she is full of contrasts--a little theatrical, but none the less commanding. Her nose is sharp and long; that is why her pictures always show her with her head thrown back. Her mouth, over her nose, is mobile with quickly changing humor. Her steel gray eyes are penetrating; they watch you intently while she talks, and they are expressive of her feeling. She is of middle height and inclined to be stout. But she carries herself with grace, and the total impression is the impression one has after reading "Monna Vanna." Mme. Maeterlinck is Maeterlinck's New Woman.

One wants to ask her the true significance of the diamond she wears in the middle of her forehead, or to see whether she would not tell the real history of the leopard skin coat she wore when she first landed in America. But soon realizing how near to the concept of Maeterlinck's feminine point of view she was one felt impelled to ask her what that New Woman was. And it was not a difficult task, for she warmed to her subject and became deeply serious.

### Her Favorite Play.

She approaches the subject of the New Woman through "Ariane et Barbe-Bleue." "That is my favorite play," she said, "and why should it not be, when Maeterlinck took me for his model? Ariane resembles me in every way, in thought and in action, absolutely." She smiled. "And not only that, but a great part of the play was founded upon my novel 'Le Choeur de la Vie.' Not many people know of this book in America, you say? It is founded wholly upon my own life."

"Would you call 'Ariane et Barbe-Bleue' a suffrage play?" she was asked, seeing that in England it had been used as propaganda literature.

"Not exactly a drama for suffragettes," Mme. Maeterlinck answered. "Granting that the underlying idea of the piece is symbolic, one can draw from it whatever one desires. There is in it a symbol of liberty and independence which are higher than life itself." This is the keynote to Mme. Maeterlinck's whole thought. She, too, separates the exterior life from the interior life, and for her there is something above life--something which is called the spirit.

"Ah, suffrage! I knew you would ask me about that. Most certainly I believe that women should have it--not only some women but all women. Why should they not possess the right to vote and to participate in all of the political and social questions that involve their country? But," she added, in answer to a query as to the manner in which women should show their interest in public affairs, "though I believe that women should be as interested in public affairs as men, still it is evident that the matter involves special aptitude. If a woman's character is such as to demand activity of this sort, then she should be privileged to satisfy it. But as for myself, I have no special aptitude for public life."

### Believes in Freedom.

"When I say that I believe in freedom for women," Mme. Maeterlinck leaned forward in her chair to show the intensity of her argument--"I understand that that the moral liberty of the spirit. That

to take part in a life larger than their own and separate from their own existence. That, to my mind, is the freedom which will inevitably lead to happiness."

"It seems to me," Mme. Maeterlinck continued, "that the education of women should always tend toward a profession. My experience teaches me that material occupations are extremely hygienic--especially hygienic for thought. But if one is looking for real freedom one must experience the activity of the spirit. Freedom cannot be given; it has to be won. That is, one has to go through the mill. Yet education might bring the results quicker. It is a very difficult question to solve, how far a young girl should be given a knowledge of life for the purpose of gaining independence. I do not think there is a form of education which will give a certain result. Were that the case [here she laughed] it would be too beautiful. If the subject of freedom could be reduced to an exact science, with an exact education for its accomplishment, would not humanity become very rapidly overprofessional?"

"What effect will this freedom have on married life?" she was asked. Mme. Maeterlinck was expecting this question. Her logical mind is quickly responsive, and her answers are not slow in coming, though several times she looked into space, a space filled with the noise of Broadway below.

"The independence of woman will have an invigorating effect on married life," she said, slowly, as though measuring her words, "because all life will be strengthened by it, and by the new force which will be given her. If in a woman there is infused the idea of moral liberty and independence, there logically follows a new force of loyalty and of truth. I believe that every union which is founded upon such truth, upon such understanding, adds to the solidity and force of life. The greater part of the time, that which brings about the most unhappy consequences in married life is the lie, and lying nearly always results in fear and in a lack of confidence between husband and wife."

"But," it was objected, "since marriage has binding obligations, according to the conventional idea, in what manner shall a wife assert her freedom?"

"As for that," exclaimed Mme. Maeterlinck, "there is an essential principle which I find to be outside of social custom. This principle is the possibility of winning life. What do I mean by that? Let me see. I find that a wife who is able to cater to her own needs merits the esteem and respect of her husband. In consequence she cultivates a form of independence which is salutary to them both. And in this manner she becomes a true companion to her husband. They go on their way in life, feeling themselves to be companions of equal force and value, who owe to each other reciprocal esteem and respect. It is most unfortunate when we think that in general the young girl is nearly always something to be bought. It is sad to believe, though it be none the less true, that she remains absolutely subordinated to the husband who supplies the material support. This condition is insupportable, so long as the form of our society sanctions such inferiority. My reasoning may be contrary to general opinion, but it is impossible for me not to say what I mean, and I am thoroughly sincere about the matter."

Her voice became emphatic during this answer, but it soon changed to humorous tact when she was asked whether she had formed an opinion of American women.

"Ah," she said, smiling, "it is impossible for me to have formed a judgment of American women. I have been such a short time in this country that I could

## CURRENT EVENTS in THE WORLD of ART



MISS MARJORIE CURTIS  
PORTRAIT BY IRVIN ALI HARRIS

ONE of the divisions in the show which the Architectural League of New York opened yesterday in the American Fine Arts Galleries is the Decolux collection of decorative designs, executed in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The collection, or rather forty-one drawings from it, is loaned by Miss Eleanor Hewitt on behalf of the Cooper Union Museum. Among the drawings is a tapestry design, gay with garlands and wreaths of many colored flowers, trophies of the chase and details of animal life, reminding one of "Chanteclair," with the peacock, the dog, the pheasant and the fox.

This drawing is peculiarly interesting because of a tapestry owned by Mrs. Elbridge T. Gerry and once in the possession of Chancellor Livingston. The tapestry appears to have been woven from a Louis XVI design so like the one in the Decolux collection that it seems as if it were the design for the tapestry itself, or at least came from the hand of the same artist.

Many mural decorations and much sculpture are in the exhibition. The sculpture includes, besides examples in the model or cast, several photographs, among which is one of the fine soldiers' memorial to be executed by Mr. Augustus Lukeman and set up in Somerville, Mass.

So successful has been the exhibition of early Spanish masters in the Ehrlich galleries, which specialize entirely in old masters, that the show is to be continued. These galleries, by the way, are believed to be the first in this city to have held an exhibition of ancient Spanish art. They have been especially successful in securing fine Zurbarans, not only for this exhibition, but previously. The "Orphaned Monk," by Zurbaran, which the Messrs. Ehrlich sold to Mr. Archer M. Huntington, is now in the museum of the Hispanic Society.

"A Student of Salamanca," which Dr. Boda characterized as "a Zurbaran nearly as fine as a Velasquez," is in Mrs. Gardner's collection in Boston. The Zurbarans in the present exhibition are four in number and include a striking canvas, "A Saint of Seville," a portrait no doubt of one of the ladies of Seville, but painted in the guise of a saint, probably St. Agatha, because the Church frowned on portraits. Besides the Zurbarans there are in the exhibition no fewer than twenty-six Spanish paintings of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the earliest two being a "Madonna and Child" by Luis de Morales and a portrait of Isabella Clara Eugenia, Infanta of Spain, by Alonzo Coello. Both Greco and Goya are represented by two pictures and Murillo by a "Christ Bound."

The galleries of Messrs. Eugene Glanzer & Co., usually devoted to old masters, fine examples of the Barbizon school and Barye bronzes, are devoting space, beginning to-morrow, to an exhibition of portraits by Mr. Ben All Haggis. The exhibition includes some of his most striking work, partly of society people and partly of the stage. Among the canvases is his portrait of Miss Marjorie Curtis, which had a conspicuous place in the recent exhibition at the National Academy. There are pictures of Mrs. Edward H. DeLafayette and Mrs. Leo Everett, besides three sketches of the artist's daughter, Miss Kitty.

N the Berlin Photographic Company galleries Mr. Martin Birnbaum has arranged an exhibition of drawings, paintings and etchings by Mr. Maurice Sterne. The drawings include the sketch for a frieze, entitled "The Harvest," which is to go into the Florentine residence of Mr. Charles Looser.

"Post-impressionism, and yet you see it," is the way one might characterize Mr. Sterne's work. For it is a fact that his post-impressionism is pushed so far that in such paintings as "Morning," "After the Bath" and "A Woman Undressing" it

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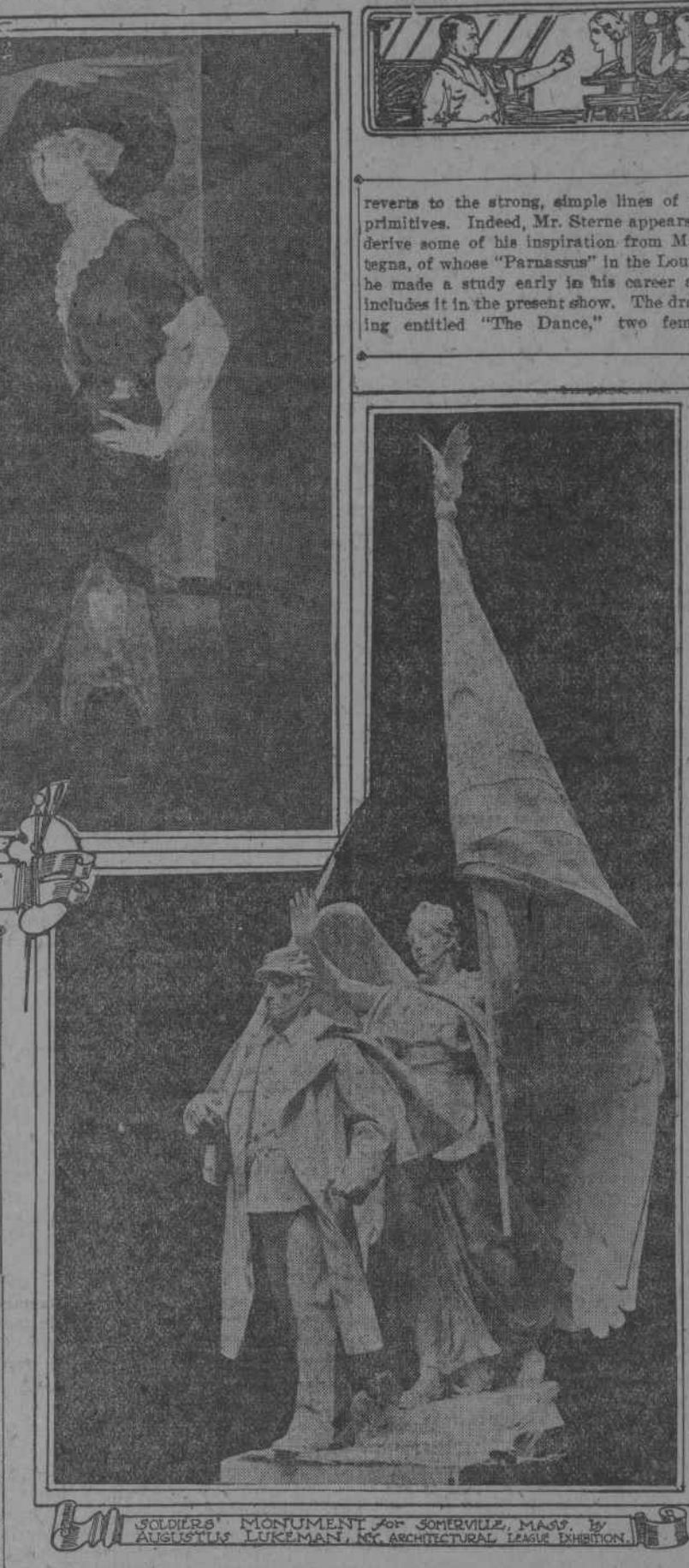
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Gordon, Miss Rita Sacchetto, Mr. J. H. Benrimo and Mr. Otis Skinner in his "Kismet" role, also are represented. Mr. Haggis' portraits are "stunts"--and effective ones.

ALL who failed to take advantage of the opportunity to see the wonderful loan exhibition of old masters in the galleries of Messrs. Knoedler & Co. should regard the fact that the exhibition closed yesterday almost as a tragedy. For a chance to see such a collection of masterpieces comes, if not only once in a lifetime, at least only once in many years. Aside from the beauty of the paintings, the early English school was represented in such an extraordinarily fine way that what the average art lover is obliged to learn from books could be studied in these galleries face to face with the paintings themselves. Nor was the exhibition devoted to the early English school alone, for its clou was the marvellous Velasquez portrait of Philip IV., the "Parma Velasquez," owned by Mr. Henry C. Frick.

MESSRS. Scott & Fowles are showing in their galleries a large Daubigny, a scene on the Oise, the river on which he drifted in his houseboat and painted the charming scenery. This picture dates from 1873 and shows the river bank with trees crowning its higher slope. The canvas is rich in greens, and over it all rests a sense of perfect calm and undisturbed tranquillity. In the same gallery is a noted Isabella, the large picture entitled "A Poor Man's Harvest." A fine Diaz, also here, is a scene in the Forest of Fontainebleau, oaks with soft light effects.

Another exhibition of Grand Canyon pictures opens during the coming week. It will be held in the Snedecor galleries and consists of pictures which have been painted during the last couple

of years by Mr. William R. Leigh, a native of Virginia, who, however, has a studio in New York. The exhibition consists of fourteen large canvases, ten smaller ones and twelve sketches. Among the paintings is a large sunset effect which was greatly admired by Mr. Thomas Moran, a veteran among American artists and one of the first to paint the canyon. Mr. Snedecor has pictures by Mr. J. A. Mohite, Mr. Aloysius O'Kelly and others in his galleries.

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reverts to the strong, simple lines of the primitives. Indeed, Mr. Sterne appears to derive some of his inspiration from Mantegna, of whose "Parnassus" in the Louvre he made a study early in his career and includes it in the present show. The drawing entitled "The Dance," two female



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THE Reinhardt galleries have recently acquired one of Mr. George De Forest Brush's Indian pictures. These pictures, dating from an early period in Mr. Brush's career, not so early, however, but that he was already doing strong and effective work, are rare and difficult to obtain. The picture in question is one of the best of the Brush Indian series. It is the "Sioux Warrior," an Indian mounted. He has pulled up his pony short and is gazing over the plain. It is a stolidly painted picture of great strength, summing up the romance and tragedy of a vanishing race. It dates from 1882.

MESSRS. ALA VOINE & CO., having required the space in their building formerly occupied by Mr. Edward Brandus, that dealer has removed his galleries to the Windsor Arcade, where he has been able to obtain ample space and fine light. Among his paintings is a collection of Barbizon pictures from the Georges Petit galleries. Dr. Paul Mersch, who is a son-in-law of Mona Sedelmeyer, also has brought to these galleries a collection of Italian and French primitives as well as of Dutch and Flemish old masters. In addition to these he has with him Romney's notable portrait of Mrs. Charnock, the sittings for which are recorded in Romney's diary.

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